

The COMMONWEAL

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Should America Formulate Peace Aims Now?

WITH lease-lend materials being contracted, manufactured and shipped in increasing volume and speed, and with local submarine scares of one kind or another already present and convoys around the corner, the American people may be faced with an outbreak of hostilities any day. The phrase "short of war" is long since forgotten; the project of aiding Britain without firing a dangerous shot is on the way to the discard now that HR 1776 and its mood have won the day. The die is, or has been, cast; the immediate prospect is obvious. But should the country charge into the fray without preparing to draw up the principles on which a just and stable post-war world can be set up? Despite talk about the "four freedoms" and the "arsenal of democracy," the United States has taken its latest historic step, to quote Mr. Roosevelt, because "we realize the danger which confronts us." There is no phrase paralleling "to save the world for democracy" as yet, and no League of Nations on the horizon.

Admittedly it is impossible in the present state of flux to set forth specific peace aims as to boundaries, territories, colonies, etc. But war aims and peace aims ought to occupy more of the attention of an intelligent public which has apparently resigned itself to war, while still, presumably, sometime wanting peace. What is the scheme for this war? How is freedom to operate practically?

How are Anglo-American principles going to be set up securely in the outrageous quarters of the globe? What are our long-term Balkan plans, and our solution for East Asia? What non-totalitarian thing is to happen when the government can no longer service the national debt? What international or supranational institutions can people be persuaded to support? Even the best war can be only partly destructive and negative. There remains a need for some slight productive and creative alternative to chaos—some war aim to keep up the morale at home and to seduce the enemy behind the fighting front.

"Total victory" does not arise from utterly destroying the force of the enemy. Shouldn't we study what kind of problems can be solved by war and what kind can be attacked after war? Armies and navies are not adequate machinery for the study of the religious, social, economic and political questions confronting the world. Institutional machinery must be created to carry on the work of imagining a world past this current war. We must cultivate the optimism of planning for peace if war is not to continue total.

Truly, "peace plans" can be twisted into selfish nationalistic battle cries, into priggish and imperialistic war formulas, into pure propaganda and pitiful escapism. Unhealthy enthusiasm could be created if increasing numbers were persuaded that "triumph" in war would lead to their own romantic utopias. Masses could be led astray if cynics promised them bread and land and roses which no war can create. There are dangers in peace aims certainly, but, nevertheless, they are on the road to peace. Without peace aims, peace would be very much a surprise.

For These There Are No Ships

AMERICAN EXPORT LINES announce that after repeated efforts to secure additional tonnage "to relieve the increasing demand for passage from Lisbon to New York," they are forced to refuse to sell more tickets in Lisbon and are obliged also to shut off the "prepaid" business whereby in New York it has been possible to furnish an immigrant with a ticket without having to export the funds. "No more tickets will be sold until additional accommodations can be arranged." As it is now, advance sales fill the Export ships leaving Lisbon till the end of June or later. At the same time John M. Franklin, president of the United States Lines, announces that the Maritime Commission has refused his company's request to place the liner *Washington* in the New York-Lisbon service. In New York this news made the front page: in France and in Lisbon it will be spoken by one man to another with despair.

Once again modern technical facilities have not been placed at the service of man. And the spec-

tacle of a great country affirming that it intends to be the arsenal for the free peoples of the world yet allowing its communications with the European continent to be reduced—even where no blockade exists—to a few small steamers and to one luxury airplane service is plainly humiliating. Persisting in a sullen resistance to immigration, and subjecting the immigrants, even when it admits their eligibility, to a further, and unofficial, test of wealth, this country will have presented, at a critical moment to unhappy and despairing men and women, a cruel inaccessibility. For this state of affairs—for many of the unnumbered suicides in Europe—we are all to blame. Generous in words and generous in money, we yet have failed to secure from our government effective collaboration. The right of asylum, which we have never ceased to proclaim, has been sold for what the traffic would bear. Ask any returning American or any arriving refugee what it cost him in cash to reach the safety of our shores.

The abominable discrimination between the poor and the rich, applied when both poor and rich were seeking the visa to refuge, applied again when they sought transportation, is abolished now, not through national generosity or justice, but only because transportation is refused impartially now to rich and poor. They had to pay to come, and now even if they can pay they will not be able to come. We, the people and the government of America, cannot find the ships for them to come in.

"A Strong, Happy, Healthy America"

THE NEW YORK papers have been carrying large display advertisements inserted by the National Committee for Planned Parenthood, and urging a better understanding and dissemination of information on how-not and when-to have children "to the end that America will be a strong, happy, healthy America."

There is no objection *per se* to urging parents to "space" their children. But how is this best done? The advertisement in question makes it abundantly clear how the National Committee for Planned Parenthood wants it done. And evidently the idealistic and liberal-minded folk who make up its membership see in their method a cure-all for most of our health troubles. The advertisement quotes a university study of the probabilities confronting the 2,000,000 putative babies of 1941; in 15 years 37 percent of them will be either dead, crippled, tubercular, mentally deficient, delinquent or "maladjusted." It argues that "the great majority of these subnormal babies are born in families which have less than \$1,000 total annual income. . . ." But it fails to point out that this is natural enough, since in all probability the majority of American families of child-bearing age have less than \$1,000 total annual income.

Naturally the incidence of "wasted" children is greater among the poor, but the poor also produce a good share of healthy and normal children and the rich have their idiots.

The truth is that on the material level America needs more, not less, children. We can feed, and clothe and house more people. Yet our economic system is such that having any children at all (off a good farm) is a burden—sometimes a tragic burden for the family. Why, then, not propaganda for family wages? For a better distribution of wealth? For decentralization? Along such roads lies the way to "strong national health."

But all of this is on the material level, and that level is far less important than the spiritual level, the very existence of which the whole NCPP school seems unwilling to admit. Here is, actually, a minimizing of sex, of the part properly played by sex in family life, which is an implicit denial of the nature and worth of man. Here is a difference between those who look on the sexual act as the source of future citizens and physical pleasure and those who look on it as so much and something more, something nourishing values as great as that of procreation, far greater than that of pleasure. To deny these values is to deny the synthesis which lies at the heart of the good married life.

Museums Are Beautiful

WHEN the National Gallery of Art was opened and dedicated, President Roosevelt gave an excellent address. The building given by Mr. Mellon is itself an important work of architecture. The pictures and statues within are all "fine art," major works of the greatest artists. A principal reason all this is great is because it enters fully into our life: it teaches lessons; it exemplifies human nature; reflects history; deals with living problems; it is great with meaning. The President's speech, although brief, touched many matters of national importance. He commented on a series of relationships: between the private rôle in art-collecting and the public; the city and the nation as stewards of art; the rights and meaning of the possession of art and its preservation; the relations between private and intimate art and public; art and internationalism; art and war; finally, America and the European tradition; art and the freedom of spirit.

The Friday before, when they had the press preview of the opening, it was very clear and chilly. From the outside the building doesn't look enormous (inside, at the dedication, three Marine Bands played on the main floor at the same time without interfering with one another). It is classic, without windows, with a porticoed entrance and a low central dome. It is made out of bewildering brilliant marble, snow white in the bright morning. Inside, the stairs lead up to the central rotunda,

a great round hall with the broad, shallow dome supported on a forest of dark marble pillars. The fountain in the center made a lovely sound, water dripping from the perfectly plumb basin below the Giovanni Bologna Mercury, evenly and coolly. In summer this will be a cool, green paradise in steaming Washington. The Hygro-Thermographs throughout the building show with their absolutely straight lines that the climate of the National Museum will not be left to chance and nature. Temperature and humidity will remain perfect.

Then we started through the high West Hall into the first gallery. The early Italian art is gathered at the beginning, Duccio and Cimabue opposite you as you enter the first room. The Kress Collection can be held almost as a unit, and still fit chronologically with the Mellon gifts. The religious intensity of the "primitive" Italian pulls all your attention. While you are still fresh, the fineness and detail encourages your close and detailed examination. As the religious atmosphere relaxes, the Renaissance loveliness of flowers and faces and textures and landscape charms you. It is a most wonderfully edited collection, with pictures all good, whether by the best known or less famous artists. As the more secular epoch develops, the pictures and sculpture appeal by their aesthetic and technical perfection and almost brooding interest in men as men, and by movement, excitement and splendor. There are Venetians, Spaniards, the Baroque. At the end of the wing are Northerners of the early Renaissance, mystics of the Rhine and Low Countries, portraits—not many, but very perfect. Then there are the lovely Garden Courts, with French fountains, and Mr. Widener's world famous mimosa, and a guard saying the building will look the same for a thousand years except lovelier as the marble mellows.

A Rembrandt room, three Vermeers, a room of lofty Van Dycks with a Rubens portrait shading them. Flemish, German, Dutch—and we are back in the Rotunda. The other half, with some fine British, some good American (early), a couple of French, four Goya paintings, and with excellent engravings, etchings, woodcuts and lithographs cannot overcome the impression made by the earlier galleries, particularly by the Italian school. How nostalgic is this museum, how quiet and thoughtful—with workmen running around, pull-and-hauling and finishing; with reporters taking notes, curators being nervous, and with marble all around, and the Capital's tourists waiting for invasion. Is Italy of all the lands on earth most beautiful? "When I hear people talk about culture I reach for my revolver." It is not a full museum. Almost no French. No modern. When Americans think of museums they think of vacations in Europe. It is a pre-depression heritage; it is pre-war. When the war is over we might go in and out the Baptistry doors of Ghiberti.

Springtime and Our Lady

By D. H. MOSELEY

BEFORE England knew Our Lady well and loved her, it was, as Faber wrote, "a floor for noisy pageant and rude bravery," but when it yielded to her charm, it began to build and sing for her. The English lyricists did not vie with Petrarch and the poets of southern Europe in describing the Blessed Virgin as "clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars"; seldom is the sun so radiant in the British Isles or the moon and stars so bright as to cause ecstasy in a race so inherently reserved. What England has in the way of beauty is a charming tenderness, and her poets have garnered evidences of this for Mary: the shining of dew on grass and rose petals, the sweetness of spring blossoms, the blitheness of lark and thrush and nightingale, the gentleness of the little lambs symbolic of her little Son.

Now in the blossomy spring
Of Jesus Christ I sing.

Thus runs a thirteenth century lyric, "A Spring Song of Love to Jesus." It suggests the poets' attitude. Even the ancient Christmas carols have a touch of spring:

He came all so still
There His Mother was
As dew in April
That falleth on the grass.

In bleak December, the British poets seem to have remembered that since winter was there, spring was not far behind; they have sung the Advent antiphon, "Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the just: let the earth be opened, and bud forth a Saviour," or they have paraphrased and combined that with other passages of scripture:

Mystic dew from heaven
Unto earth is given.
Break, O earth, a Saviour yield,
Fairest flower of the field.

William Dunbar, a priest educated at St. Andrew's, made of his poem "On the Nativity of Christ" a veritable spring paean:

Now flowers spring up from the root,
Revert you upward naturally,
In honor of the blessed fruit
That rose up from the rose Mary.

It is possible to believe that he had in mind old Jacopone da Todi's description of the little angels joining hands and dancing in a ring while heaven and earth broke into flowery smiles at the sight of the Child Jesus. More poignant lines are those of the poet Robert Southwell, an Elizabethan priest who was to know pain and martyrdom:

Out of His tears, His sighs and throbs
doth bud a joyful spring.

The English spring begins early and tarries as if to relish its own loveliness. By Candlemas Day, February 2, when the Church sings in the "Ave Regina": "Salve radix, salve porta," the snowdrops and aconites are in bloom, and by March 25, the Feast of the Annunciation, the countryside is bright with flowers. "There shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him," reads the Little Chapter of None of Lady Day, and the Gospel of the Mass, with its reference to the overshadowing of Mary by the power of the Most High, is a most fitting one for what was frequently called in past centuries the "Feast of the Incarnation." John Lydgate must have thought of it when he wrote, some time in the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century, "The Child Jesus to Mary the Rose":

My Father above, beholding the meekness,
As dew on roses doth his balm spread,
Sendeth His Ghost . . .

And there were set down in the fourteenth century "Cursor Mundi" manuscript the lines of "A Song of the Five Joys":

There thou layest in thy bright bower
Lady white as lily flower,
An angel came from heaven's tower,
Saint Gabriel,
And said, "Lady, full of bliss, all work thee well."

As typically English, perhaps, though far later, is Cowley's account of the angels making ready for the Incarnation:

Some as they went, the blue-ey'd violets strew,
Some spotless lilies in loose order threw,
Some did the way with full blown roses spread.

Pope's "Messiah" sounds a similar welcome:

From Jesse's root behold a branch arise
Whose sacred flow'r with fragrance fills the skies. . . .
See Nature hastes her earliest wreaths to bring
With all the incense of the breathing spring.

Here some of our young liturgists might note that the British poets were not unfamiliar with antiphons and little chapters, and even turned them to their own uses. They seem to have taken particular delight in the scripture verses that compare Our Lord and Our Lady with the lily and rose, blossoms so dear to England. "I am the flower of the field and the lily of the valleys" was a favorite line with them. In the Vernon Manuscript is a charming poem in which Our Lady addresses Our Lord as her "Fleur-de-lys." But sometimes it is the Blessed Virgin herself who is referred to as a lily; in the "Canterbury Tales" she is the "whyte lily flour," while in a Trinity College manuscript, she is called "the lily of chastete." But usually Mary is the rose. The poets interpreted "I was exalted like a palm tree in Cades, and as a rose plant in Jericho" literally; botanists may claim that the rose of Jericho was an oleander, but in Europe, the rose of Jericho,

symbolical of Mary, was a real rose. Continental litanies that antedate the Litany of Loreto addressed her as "Unfading Rose," "Rose of Martyrs," and such expressions doubtless had medieval poetry as their source. It was in the center of the White Rose of Paradise that Dante beheld the Virgin Mother, thus forever causing her to be associated with the loveliest of blossoms in the minds of the literary. Adam of Saint Victor had already sung:

Redder than the rose art thou,
Whiter than the falling snow,
Dewier than the rose dew-strewn,
Brighter than the splendorous moon.

Thirteenth century England had taken up the echo:

Lady, flour of alle thing,
Rosa sine spina.

And, from year to year came the re-echo:

There is no rose of swich vertu
As the rose that bare Jhesu.
Alleluia
For in this rose contained was
Hevene and erthe in litel space,
Res miranda.

The flower to which Our Lady is likened is not always specified. There is, for instance, in a fifteenth century Lambeth manuscript, "A Song of Great Sweetness from Christ to his Dear Dame," a coronation hymn for Mary:

Filia Sion, thou art the flower,
My palace is dight for thy pleasure clear,
Full of bright branches and blossoms of bliss.
Come now, Mother, to thy darling dear:
Veni coronaberis.

In such a line as "Mother mild, flower of all," there is always a reminder of spring, for mildness is a quality that the English like to ascribe to that season, and we are struck with the fact that the early English lyrists used the adjective mild frequently in connection with Mary's name. In the Egerton manuscript there is "A Prayer to the Mother of Mildness," while in one at Trinity is the verse:

Sainte Marie, Moder milde,
Mater salutaris,
feirest flour of eni feld,
Vere nunciparis.

And again, "Glade us Maiden, Moder milde."

The early songs are themselves so mild, so simple and lovely, that we wonder what English poetry might have become had its flow not been stemmed by the artificiality that followed the Reformation, when even Catholic poets such as Crashaw and Southwell resorted to curious conceits. Happily nowadays there is a return to the old simplicity and to the dignity of the Liturgy. Newman promised England, Mary's Dower, a Second Spring. Surely the Queen of Peace will hasten its coming so that again, in quiet mornings white with hawthorn, she will be hailed as "full of grace."

Out of the Night?

One of the few men in America able to judge the reliability of Valtin's book gives his verdict.

By H. A. Reinhold

IN THE beginning it seemed easy to write a review of "Out of the Night."* It is so close to the scene and time of my own life that it almost appeared impossible that I had never met "Jan Valtin" or heard of him. He is certainly one of the finest story tellers I have ever encountered, and I must confess that his book cost me many hours of sleep! I just could not find the will power to switch the light off long after midnight, although I knew that I should have to give communion at 5:30 that same morning.

Hamburg, the center of his activities, is my own home town, and its waterfront was the scene of my activities as a seamen's chaplain. For years I was stationed in Bremerhaven, and often I had to go to the ports of Bremen, Lubeck, Kiel and Stettin. In my organizing capacity I visited my fellow chaplains at Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Antwerp, Le Havre and the British ports many a time in the years from 1929 to 1935. Looking back on those hectic years and our hard work to organize Catholic sailors in the German and other merchant fleets, it seems to be hardly credible that we ever tried to compete at all with those dark forces which Valtin describes. While Moscow poured thousands of dollars and millions of pamphlets into the ships, we wrestled with a few measly hundred marks to keep our clubs alive and to print an eight-page monthly. Moscow had thousands of agitators and secret agents disseminating discontent, carefully trained in high-powered party schools. We had a few unemployed seamen who volunteered to go aboard ships in exchange for a hot meal and a bed. During vacations we enjoyed the luxury of having students from one of the social workers' schools run by the Catholic Charities helping us. And in the end? . . . Seen with human eyes, their failure was greater than ours.

Reading Valtin's book I am glad that at the time I did not realize what we really were up against! Had I known the sinister doings of our secret competitors, their power, their tremendous efficiency, I probably would have sat back and twiddled my thumbs in desperate apathy.

Of course we read in our papers that red activities were responsible for strikes, mutinies and

street battles. We were all alarmed when the strike at Leningrad and Sebastopol reflected on our Bremerhaven boats, and when the strikers were tried in Cuxhaven and on the Kiel Canal locks. But what did we know about the events behind the scenes? Now that I have read Valtin's book, scales fall from my eyes.

I remember very well the incident in Norway which Valtin describes as having taken place when he brought German-built ships to Murmansk on his short career as a skipper. The papers were full of it—and Bremerhaven too! There were lots of seamen who were nazis and communists and pretended at the same time to be Catholics. I shall never forget a wild-eyed, foul-mouthed, middle-aged stoker who used to hang around our club. In our discussions he always antagonized everybody by his constant interruptions of any speaker. One night, while we were having dinner at the rectory across the street from the Seamen's Club, we heard the typical noise of a communist procession outside: the weird, blood-curdling rhythm of the drum, the shawms, and the hoarse voices of more than a thousand singing men. I left the dinner table and stood on the sidewalk in a silent crowd watching the numberless red banners and flaring torches go by. It was a dark, foggy night, and the red glow gave an exciting, flickering light to our town. This had been announced as a demonstration of the unemployed, and now the gigantic streamers showed us clearly that it was a communist affair. Then this man broke out of the ranks, screaming communist slogans and shaking his fist under my nose—"du Pfaffe," an untranslatable term of derision and contempt for priests, similar to the Italian "crow."

But these and dozens of other incidents we never connected with immediate activity of a communist general staff and with names like Wollweber, Walter and Komissarenko. We had lots of nazi and communist spies; seamen with membership cards and badges, either communist or nazi; but who could take such things very seriously in an orderly, democratic state? Did we not have a solid middle class, an army, a republican police and fine public-minded trade unions? Rowdyism was no way of impressing us!

Jan Valtin has opened my eyes and like lightning, illuminating the whole firmament, the patched

* By Jan Valtin. Alliance. \$3.50.

scenery suddenly grows into an organized whole, and the two competing forces become rival armies with shock troops and cannon fodder, secret services and general staffs and a continuous strategy. These inarticulate men become cogs in great machines, cells in huge organisms, fired by integrated, fully-developed faiths and fanatic with despair and hope! What a gigantic struggle and how naive were we in our false security, our smug bourgeois and pseudo-Christian confidence that nothing would happen!

I had a poor unemployed nazi in my club, a good fellow, receiving Holy Communion with all the others every month. He had the appetite of a boa constrictor, and a Bavarian brogue which sounded like mountain winds and snow avalanches, harsh and yet beautiful. He received a miserable dole, just enough to starve, but to do so slowly. And yet he sent his dues and more than his dues to Adolf Hitler, to him personally, as he said with pride. You could not argue with him. He was immune to reason. He could have killed any communist or Jew, and he would not have mentioned it in confession. Jan Valtin himself is one of such people, although he seems to be without a trace of religion. And we were like rabbits or birds playing in no man's land between the trenches. Once in a while a whiff of death and blood would strike our nostrils; we would ponder for a moment, talk of the danger and then go on with our busy activity.

A dynamism

We priests in Germany were forced to read a lot of communist propaganda literature, either directly thrown at us, or through the medium of the digests of our better-informed professors or in the study club material of our Catholic organizations. I think we had a pretty good picture of communism as a doctrine. My seamen came back from Russian ports and reported miracles. I read with great interest Trotsky's biography. But never was I so struck with the completeness of a godless, inhuman, consistent, thoroughgoing and driving *Weltanschauung* as in Valtin's book. This non-intellectual, "lived" Marxism of plain seaman and waterfront organizer is far more impressive in its vividly actual reactions than any of the learned treatises of party bigwigs and theoreticians. In Valtin's book the real danger of communism and nazism becomes obvious: It is a faith, a religion—perhaps best compared with Islam!

Valtin's life puts us to shame in its restless devotion to his cause of justice and a new world order. The same was true of a few—very few—decent nazis I knew.

And yet—what did the Third International profit through its hectic activity? Murder, rebellion, bribery, "liquidation," strikes, souls filled with hate and visions of unreal utopias—and all

this trampled under the feet of its still more ruthless and brutal rivals, the nazis. Valtin's description of their savagery is revolting. I do not think that here he is essentially untrue. Once in a while, in a detail, the brilliant writer may have got the best of the reporter of facts. But on the whole what he has to say corresponds to the whispered reports of frightened men just released from "K Z," from concentration camps. His description of the Hamburg Gestapo headquarters, the character of Streckenbach (not *Schreckenbach*, as he calls him) are sober and bring back to me less terrible and agonizing hours which I spent in its walls and face to face with the chief inquisitor, "Johnny," as he was called by his nazi friends. Little details show that Valtin is trustworthy; e.g., the case of his fellow prisoner in Fuhlsbuettel, Colmitz, whom his guards hounded to death. (His wife and sons live in this country.) I knew him well enough, as he was a fellow student in Freiburg in 1919. Later he was editor of a moderate socialist paper in Lubeck. Never was he a communist. He died a martyr for his cause—a lost cause, the spirit of which had long since petered out.

The truth of it

Valtin's book is terrible and cruel. We will never be able to verify every single statement he makes. But I have checked as many of his stories as possible against my own experience and information, and I have found him correct wherever I could check up, and that is not little. I have been in contact with a former leading communist, through a mutual friend. His verdict was: "This book is extremely reliable in all things concerning facts and persons. In hundreds of places where I was able to check up, it is absolutely accurate. For instance, Wollweber, his antagonist, although Valtin hates him and although his whole book reads like a public denunciation of this man, is depicted true to nature and quite correctly. I knew him myself in 1923-1924, and I remember him exactly as the Wollweber of Valtin 'in the bud' . . . His chapter 'Soviet Skipper' is of the stuff of the greatest epics, which is all the more shocking as it happened in our own, real world. It reads like a Greek tragedy, only on a broader stage. On the whole, Valtin's knowledge of the world of seafaring men is unique and true." So far our internationally-known Marxist theoretician. Like this expert, who left the "party" fifteen years ago, I was, quite independently, convinced that Valtin never "slips"; he knows, e.g., only a few red bigshots, and only the men he possibly could know, if he was what he said he was. Never does he try to brag about his acquaintance with personalities, but they come and go, full of life and plastically seen, integral actors in this great epic of a whole nation.

I also learned of the reaction of a Catholic, a person close to the *Catholic Worker*: "Too much repetition and perhaps a lot of untruth." How strange! "Too much repetition"—as if Valtin had the task of arranging a fiction! Of course, his tedious parallelism is sometimes tiring, but does that render Valtin suspicious? On the contrary.

My objections are different. I doubt that a man who kept no diaries could reconstruct so much detail, especially the dialogues. I suspect that some of the scenes in the Hamburg Gestapo headquarters have been touched up and reconstructed. I doubt—I hope out of equity—that the ghastly funeral scene in the Fuhlbuettel prison is correct in all its details. Every now and then the writer becomes morbid about sex and suffers from repulsive exhibitionism. Of course the things he describes are possible with a gang of brownshirts. I admit that the nazis were devilish and fierce. Hitler himself admitted after his blood purge of June 30, 1934, that immorality was rife. But I think that the author misjudges the American public. Even if all this is true, Americans will refuse to believe it, not because they are Puritans, but because it just sounds incredible to sound men and women. Yet a man who suffered as Valtin did ought to be forgiven if he once in a while dramatizes his story. Considering everything, I should say that this book seems to be perhaps 95 percent correct and 5 per cent "retouched," which is a tremendously good record for any autobiographer.

There is one point on which I have serious doubts. It concerns Valtin's escape from the Fuhlbuettel concentration camp. He tells us that the "Komintern" man inside the Gestapo, Heitmann, gave him orders to do as he did and that he obeyed, as he always had obeyed the Komintern without resistance. Then he goes on describing his maneuvers to convince his tormentors of his change of heart. I have no evidence to doubt him. But I am astonished that his shrewd inquisitors should have fallen for such a crude business.

A new world

Nobody will read this book without feeling that a new world has been thrown open to him. The nazi and communist appear like wolfish step-brothers. A world of totalitarian beings, not only philosophies, but human beings who have nothing to do with humanity. Cold, fierce, cruel and consistent beings. Animals, heartless and fanatic, endowed with calculating, methodical and sharp minds, killing each other to build their new paradise.

Jan Valtin revolted against this impersonal, icy world. It is the revolt of the heart against the reason gone mad, of the person against impersonal molochs. The conflict between the cold moloch of his party and his human heart flickers every now and then through this book in his love for

Firelei, his wife. She redeems him finally from his cold demon, the party, and in the end the party man emerges as a human being.

We have had reporters' stories about Russia and Germany galore, but such men are merely observers, however correct, impartial or sympathetic. We have had fiction by people who never set foot into these lands and yet sold best sellers on Moscow now and in the future. We have read individual stories of men and women who escaped from the brown and red hell of terror. But none of them so frank, so honest and sincere, so well informed as this story.

Our Marxist intellectual, already quoted, wonders if Valtin has really come "out of the night." He suspects that the author is still the old communo-fascist, is not truly converted, and that he will never adjust himself to existing conditions.

As a matter of fact, except for Valtin's conversion away from servitude to the principles of Marx and Lenin and his obvious disgust with the outcome of all totalitarianism; apart from his joy at having found freedom and a livable life, we do not find what fills him now. A man who belonged to a messianic idea as Valtin did, with burning intensity, may relax for a while and bask in the sun in sheer delight to have escaped from the bonds of darkness. But what is, apart from the material sun, the light of his present and future life? His noblest instinct was always his "hunger and thirst for justice." Has it left him? Or will it throw open a gate to a world which he has as yet to discover: the world toward which he has been chemically sterile? Is there a vacuum in his soul into which the Holy Spirit may enter "with a sound from heaven as of a mighty wind coming, filling the whole house"?

Song for a Palm

That fountain of greenness there,
that palm burst from the earth
whets thirst:

from these days

like a wormy earth, what times like springs
shall rise, what singing? what days
like fields shall come, all husbandry,
all yields, all peace—
birds risen from earth to speak what
lies before, northward and southward,
four-windwards, ah,
what companies, what hordes?

What honey shall not come
as love to all the tongues?

That
fountain of greenness there
whets thirst.

RAYMOND E. F. LARSSON.

Gerard Manley Hopkins, S. J.

A critic analyzes his genius
and stature as a major poet.

By Robert Speaight

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS is the most formidable of the major English poets. Many say they cannot stand his poetry; many say they cannot understand it; but no one can dismiss it. He is a challenge that must be met. "Take breath and read it with my ears," he wrote to Robert Bridges, "and my verse becomes all right;" and again to Coventry Patmore: "Such verse as I do compose is oral, made away from paper, and I put it down with repugnance." Just as one feels, listening to the later Quartets of Beethoven, that one is being taken somewhere beyond music, or witnessing "The Tempest" that one is passing beyond drama, so in reading the poetry of Hopkins one feels that one is being taken beyond speech, and that the poet is sometimes asking of words more than words will bear.

Many people are put off by the extravagance and experimentalism of the poet's technique. They cannot see the sun for the syntax; they cannot hear the song for the harmony. They are so puzzled by the way he is doing it, that they miss altogether what it is he does. I am far from denying the reality of these obstacles, but I am sure they occupy an excessive part in the normal study of Hopkins. I am sure that it is possible to trace a path through the dense undergrowth of involved and twisted prosody to the music and the meaning beyond it. Many of Hopkins's thoughts are quite simple thoughts and many of his tunes are quite simple tunes. He is not a problem; he is a poet.

The following fragment was suggested to him by the text from Leviticus, "As for the oblation of the first fruits, ye shall offer them unto the Lord."

The dappled die-away
Cheek and wimpled lip,
The gold-wisp, the airy-grey
Eye, all in fellowship—
This, all this beauty blooming,
This, all this freshness fuming,
Give God while worth consuming.

This illustrates a thought, very dear to him, which he was later to illuminate at greater length and with greater complexity in "The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo." In a way it is simple as an Elizabethan love-song, but even here we have the signature of Hopkins in the deliberate alliteration, the compound words and the over-running of the sense from line to line. It is just this over-run-

ning, or "over-reaving"—as Hopkins called it—which makes his verse so difficult to read aloud. One is hard put to preserve the sense and the metre at the same time.

Originality and obscurity

Anyone hearing "The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo" for the first time will almost surely say that it is like no poetry he has ever heard. That is quite true; yet it is not in the least an obscure poem as, for example, Shakespeare's "Phoenix and the Turtle" and T. S. Eliot's "Burnt Norton" are obscure poems. Its meaning is simple; the return of creation to the creator. But the language is not simple at all.

Come then, your ways and airs and looks, locks, maiden gear, gallantry and gaiety and grace,
Winning ways, airs innocent, maiden manners, sweet looks, loose locks, long locks, lovelocks, gaygear, going gallant, girlgrace—

Resign them, sign them, seal them, send them, motion them with breath.

And with sighs soaring, soaring sighs deliver

Them; beauty-in-the-ghost, deliver it, early now, long before death

Give beauty back, beauty, beauty, beauty, back to God, beauty's self and beauty's giver.

With its repetitions, its grammatical license, its elaborate assonance and alliteration and its interior rhymes, this poem hammers its way home to the ear by every instrument of melody and percussion. If one objects that at times one can hardly catch the meaning for the noise, the answer may be that this was exactly what Hopkins intended; that instead of giving us an idea appropriately expressed by words, he was giving us an idea which had actually become words; that his technique was a technique of transubstantiation. Perhaps he would have discovered in this fusion of thought and speech a definition of poetry itself.

Now whatever one may think of "The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo"—whether one thinks it is beautiful or whether one merely thinks it is extraordinary—one cannot deny that it is modern. But of course it is not, in point of time, a modern poem at all. It was written nearly sixty years ago. This would be less astonishing if Hopkins had been a man belonging, spiritually, to a time other than his own. But Hopkins was not such a man. He was no more separated from his

age than Cardinal Newman or Coventry Patmore. He was a Victorian. Yet he anticipated the poetry of half a century later. That is the mystery.

He was born in 1842 of middle-class parents in the London suburb of Highgate, where he attended the local school. His school-days were not happy. We have a photograph of him at the age of fourteen. The thin, slightly parted lips; the large, intense, half-opened eyes; the rather Grecian nose; the sunken, hollow cheeks; the whole head standing out alertly over the white collar—these betoken a spiritual impatience and a deep interior discontent. And we have the right counterpart to them in the boy who wrote, on the one hand, verse of surprising sensuous beauty, and undertook, on the other, acts of heroic self-denial. The ardors of the imagination and the sensibility and scruples of conscience are seen here in conflict. We owe the greatest poetry of Hopkins to the fact that this conflict was never finally resolved. It seldom is.

In 1863 he went up to Balliol College, Oxford. During the next three crucial years he developed his capacities in three directions. Oxford is a great factory of friendship, and Hopkins, who was always a lover, for the first time became intimate friends with Robert Bridges, then an undergraduate like himself. He made three demands of his friends, which were not easy to satisfy. Writing many years later to Bridges, he said:

I think then no one can admire beauty of the body more than I do, and it is of course a comfort to find beauty in a friend or a friend in beauty. But this kind of beauty is dangerous. Then comes beauty of the mind, such as genius, and this is greater than the beauty of the body and not to call dangerous. And more beautiful than the beauty of the mind is beauty of character, the "handsome heart."

Bridges, with a few others, fulfilled this high ideal. At the same time he was developing his talent for poetry, and formulating his views upon it. We have some rather lush echoes of Keats, and a Platonic Dialogue on the Origin of Beauty. Hopkins was a very considerate critic, and all this might have resulted in an early and abundant fruition of his gifts, but for one fact. On March 12, 1865, there is a mysterious entry in his diary: "A day of the great mercy of God."

In 1866 he was received into the Catholic Church by Dr. Newman at the Oratory, Edgbaston, and two years later he entered the novitiate of the Society of Jesus. He wrote no further poetry for seven years.

Some admirers of Hopkins—and among them his closest friends—regretted his immersion in the activities and the apostolate of the Society, and wished that he had chosen to glorify God by means less drastically disciplined and direct. But that, we must insist, was Hopkins's business. Certainly, the Oxford of the Sixties was *terrain fertile* for his conversion. Theology was in the

air. Newman had published his "Apologia" in '64. There was, among all those brilliant young men, an almost feverish interest in Catholicism. But in the case of Hopkins we have to look far deeper than circumstantial reasons. He had been a devout Anglican to be sure, but we have his word that his conversion, when it came, was "all in a minute." But why, we may ask, did he choose the martial law of the Society, when he might have been a secular priest? Why did a man with so passionate a love of beauty in man and nature circumscribe his creative power?

No one can give the complete answer to that question. His religious journal has been lost, and we only have one letter touching on his vocation and the extent to which he felt he had disappointed it. There is no reason to read into this more than the trained humility of a not naturally humble man. Hopkins was a good, though he was not, perhaps, a highly successful priest. He never talked about his interior life for the same reason that a man does not talk about his love affairs; and I hope I shall not be misunderstood when I say that, in the case of Hopkins, his religion and his love affairs were one. I believe, simply, that he found supremely in Christ that beauty of body, mind and spirit which he demanded from his earthly friends, and that only toward the person of Christ could he indulge his ardor without risk of disillusionment or excess.

I am not suggesting that he found peace. The way of the lovers of Jesus is not an easy one. But there can be no doubt that his daily, intimate communion with Christ profoundly affected the scope of Hopkins's verse. Without his vocation Hopkins would surely have written great love poetry, as we normally understand that term. With it he still wrote some of the greatest nature poetry in the English language. But his ability to read Christ into his neighbor—and I doubt if it was a natural ability; I doubt if it would have come to him except by sacramental grace—enlarged the scope of his loving. The poetry of desire was transmuted into the poetry of compassion.

"Felix Randal" is a good example of this. It was written in 1880, twelve years after he joined the Society.

Felix Randal the farrier, O he is dead then? my duty
all ended,
Who have watched his mould of man, big-boned and
hardy-handsome
Pining, pining, till time when reason rambled in it and some
Fatal four disorders, fleshed there, all contended?
Sickness broke him. Impatient he cursed at first, but
mended
Being anointed and all; though a heavenlier heart began
some
Months earlier, since I had our sweet reprieve and ransom
Tendered to him. Ah well, God rest him all road ever
he offended!

Those are the first eight lines of a sonnet, and their length is a metrical innovation; but they compose a moving and a comparatively simple poem. Under the stress of his charity Hopkins was returning to an older tradition of English verse. It was a medieval tradition—of "Piers Plowman" and, in part, of Chaucer—and it was continued, and consummated, by Shakespeare. It found matter for the highest poetry in the humors of the earth and its humanity. Shakespeare and Chaucer were not, indeed, untouched by romanticism, but they never surrendered to the romantic heresy which sought perfection in human relationships and the contemplation of natural beauty. They did not, in their maturer vision, ask of human nature more than it could bear. They stand opposed to Wordsworth with what Hopkins wittily called "his goodness and neckcloth."

I am not disparaging the romantic tradition of English poetry. I am not disparaging Wordsworth. Hopkins himself had a warm admiration for Tennyson and was not without some appreciation of Swinburne, both of whom were his near contemporaries. But the romantic tradition was beginning to wear pretty thin, and Hopkins's originality consisted not merely in technical experiments whose value cannot always be established and which were, in any case, personal to him, but in reaffirming an earlier tradition. This was not so much wilful as involuntary. Coventry Patmore wrote: "To me his poetry has the effect of pure gold imbedded in masses of impracticable quartz"; but he went on to say: "He assures me that his thoughts involuntarily moved in such numbers and that he did not write them from preconceived theories." What is unfamiliar to us in Hopkins's verse is of course his use of sprung rhythm. Far too much ink has been spilt over this, and one cannot do better than refer to his own very lucid contrast between sprung and common rhythm.

The new prosody, sprung rhythm, is really quite a simple matter and as strict as the other rhythm. . . . Its principle is that all rhythm and all verse consists of feet and each foot must contain one stress or verse-accent; so far is common to it and common rhythm; to this it adds that the stress alone is essential to a foot and that therefore even one stressed syllable may make a foot running, which in common rhythm can, regularly speaking, never happen.

This contrast is very clearly shown in "Spring and Fall":

Márgarét are you grieving
Over Goldenrope unleaving?
Leáves, like the things of man, you
With your fresh thoughts care for, can you?
Ah! ás the heart grows older
It will come to such sights colder
By and by, nor spare a sigh
Though worlds of wanwood leafmeal lie;

And yet you will weep and know why,
Now no matter, child, the name:
Sórrów's springs áre the same.

Here the first, third, fifth, and final lines are in sprung rhythm, and if one sets them beside the description of the death of Christ from "Piers Plowman," one begins to see that, with all his eccentricities, Hopkins was conforming to an ancient mode of prosody.

Piteously and pale—as a prisoner that dieth
The lord of life and light—then laid his eyes together.

Ancient, but not archaic. Most of his verse has the fresh tang of the vernacular. "The poetical language of an age," he wrote, "should be the current language heightened, to any degree heightened and unlike itself, but not . . . an obsolete one. This is Shakespeare and Milton's practice and the want of it will be fatal to Tennyson's idylls and plays, to Swinburne and perhaps to Morris." It has been. A comparison between Tennyson's "Becket" and Eliot's "Murder in the Cathedral" proves Hopkins to have been right.

Buried Mss.

If he had not been a Jesuit, he would almost certainly have written a greater bulk of verse; he might have sought and obtained earlier publication; yet who would have listened to Hopkins in 1880? As it was, Bridges kept all his Mss. and published them in 1918. It is a romantic story—the voice of a poet thirty years in the grave suddenly fluttering the dove-cotes of the literary world. The long withholding of the poems must have been a severe exercise in patience for his friend, but it was wholly in accord with that "common sense" which Hopkins declared was "never out of place anywhere, neither on Parnassus or on Mount Tabor nor on the Mount where Our Lord preached." Common sense—might he not have learned that, too, from the Society, whose strength has been its knowledge of human nature? I do not see it written on the face of the meditative boy, who was unhappy at Highgate School.

And it was only in the measure of faith that his heart was satisfied in religion. He was tried and tested to the end. He was not at peace. If we turn from the pure praise of "God's Grandeur" and the happy, loving annotations of "Pied Beauty" and the quivering sympathy with "Binsey Poplars"—"felled, felled, all felled"—to his more subjective verse, we are made aware of an extraordinary tension. In 1885, four years before his early death, he wrote to a friend: "The melancholy I have all my life been subject to has become of late years not indeed more intense in its fits but rather more distributed, constant and crippling . . . when I am at the worst, though my judgment is affected, my state is much like madness." And three years later to Bridges: "Nothing comes: I am a cunuch—but it is for the

Kingdom of Heaven's sake." He uttered this mood in a series of sonnets, which are, perhaps, the capital achievement of his verse.

I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day
What hours, O what black hours we have spent
This night! what sights you, heart, saw; ways you went!
And more must, in yet longer light's delay
With witness I speak this. But where I say
Hours I mean years, mean life. And my lament
Is cries countless, cries like dead letters, sent
To dearest him that lives alas! away.

This is the continent of "King Lear," and I doubt if the Dark Night of the Soul has ever been expressed more sublimely.

Gerard Manley Hopkins was not, in the exact sense, a mystical poet. He had believed in the world of the spirit, but the scales had never, so far as he has told us, been released from his eyes.

He had not seen. Perhaps the mood of heroic, clinging faith, and its implied struggle, in which he was called to his reward, contributed to that unique agony of expression, which makes his poetry at first difficult and finally rewarding to read. For Hopkins is a poet with whom familiarity breeds reverence and affection. He is often intractable, sometimes incomprehensible, frequently obscure. But as we see him stretched on the rack between right and wrong, between heaven and hell, he moves us not only to admiration but to pity. We feel, with Patmore, "the authority for his goodness." He fascinates where at first he repelled; and we are made aware of what his friend Canon Dixon called "the terrible crystal" of pathos at the heart of his poetry. Shakespeare and Sophocles and Keats discovered the same crystal by digging in the same quarry.

Chapter from a Last Novel

By Jesse Stuart

THE CAR stopped at the corner of the street. A man stepped from the car. He was a well-dressed prosperous looking man with a cigar in his mouth. He stood on the street and looked at a courthouse that was a landmark in this small town.

"That courthouse looks like it's crippled with age," he remarked to a man with long whiskers that sat on the street-curbing and whittled an elm limb with a hawkbill knife.

"Yep, she's purty old," the man whittling the elm stick replied. After he spoke, he spat a bright sluice of ambeer onto the street. "If you's old as that house and if you'd a-seen the trouble that she's seen, you'd be crippled too."

The old man with tobacco-stained beard kept whittling. There were many old men sitting on the courthouse street-curbing, whittling sticks, chewing their home-grown burley and talking. While the stranger from a big car with "fureign" license looked at the courthouse, they stopped talking and watched the stranger.

"Do you ever have any fights around here?"

"Yep, a few of 'em, stranger."

"Anybody ever get killed?"

"Every once in a while one kicks the bucket."

The strange man stood on the gray pavement in a small Kentucky town. He saw the ambeer stains on the gray pavement where the men had sat all day. He felt a gust of wind that lifted the dead elm leaves from the courthouse yard and carried them to the street and deposited them, to hide the ambeer stains. No doubt this man was

from some big city and he felt curious about this courthouse that stood a monument in this small county-seat town to a people the world knew little about. One could easily guess that this man didn't know these whittlers came in from the hills and sat on the courthouse street-curbing and enjoyed the beauty of their county's capitol.

"If this courthouse could speak," the stranger remarked, "I'll bet it could tell some strange stories!"

"If that courthouse could speak," the old man said, "somebody would kill it before it said very much. You know people can talk too much. When they talk too much here, they don't live. It's a good thing that the courthouse can't speak."

"I'm glad it can't talk," the stranger replied. "I hope it lives forever."

He stood amid the gusts of September winds that swept dead leaves and swirls of dust from the courthouse square onto the streets. He stood amid the loneliness of a small silent town that was akin to death. He saw the distant hills with their boney edges that stood high in a semicircle around the town. He stood among the dreams, lost and forgotten dreams of men now dead that had walked these streets in their lifetime and had loved this town.

"My people came from here long ago," he said. "That is why I am here. I have heard my grandfather speak of this courthouse when I was a boy. He said that his father came here when he was a boy and he told tales to my father about the things that took place here and my father told them to

me. I am an old man now. That has been a long long time ago."

"Yep, she's shore a fur-piece back yonder," the old man said whittling away on his stick of elm wood.

"I believe I've wonned the whittling match," said another old man as he spat onto the street. "I've whittled the longest shavin'."

"It ain't from the right kind of wood though," said another old man. "You ain't whittled your shavin' from elm wood. You whittled it from soft poplar wood."

The old men continued whittling and chewing their home-grown burley.

The stranger stood and looked again at the ancient courthouse.

"We're goin' to haf to have a new courthouse purty soon," one of the men said. "That courthouse is old enough to walk with a stick. She needs to be overhauled."

The stranger stood in silence as if the courthouse spoke to him.

"Is she speakin' to you, stranger?" the old man asked. "A lot of people say she speaks to them."

I was built before the Americans fought the British in 1775. I was rebuilt when the Americans fought the British in 1812. I remember when they moved my rotten log-bones that had seen the boys in their raccoon caps and their beaver-skin gloves and their deer-skin moccasins enlist here to fight at King's Mountain. Daniel Boone came here and his brother Jesse Boone lived here. We gave Daniel Boone men to fight the Indians; we gave Simon Kenton men. We relieved a siege at the small town of Cincinnati. We gave men to George Rogers Clark so that he might win the Northwest Territory. We gave him strong hearty men who had nerves of steel and the eyes of eagles; we gave tough men—men tough as hickory sprouts. And if you don't believe we helped win the Revolutionary War, look at the epitaphs on these valley tombstones! We helped to conquer this Dark and Bloody ground. We helped to fight in all of America's wars, but we have fought so among ourselves. We have always been fighting.

I have stood here more than a century. When my wooden bones were replaced in 1812, I got the first brick bones in this region. But the boys that came into my care when I had wooden bones, I can't forget. I remember when we had our hangings every Sunday. We hanged the boys for rape, playing poker, stealing, getting illegitimate children, fighting and cutting and shooting and using rocks and clubs. People would come from all over the county to a hanging. They loved a hanging. They would take the boys from the wooden jail that stood right on this square. They would put

them on a wagon and let them ride on their coffins to the hang-tree right down there over the Sandy Bridge. Since those days, God Almighty sent lightning and killed that tree. People wouldn't cut it up for stove wood and burn it in their stoves.

That tree was haunted by the spirits of the men whose lives it had taken. They would have a band whose players wore red jackets and white breeches. The noose would be hanging from a long suspended rope from the big limb on the elm tree. They put the noose over the neck of the first man to be hanged and while the mules pulled the wagon with his coffin from under him, the band struck up a lively tune and the man swung without a cap over his face with his tongue out.

That's the way they hanged the men and the people hollered until it deafened you. They went wild over their hangings. Women fainted in the crowd and men dashed buckets of cold water on their faces and brought them to their senses, squirming on the ground like snakes. It was great fun to see the hanged men's loved ones riding away with their blood-kin in the homemade oak box on a jolt-wagon. It was fun to hear them weep. And it was great sport to see many, many, many hanged at one time. It gave the people a thrill. But something happened and the people got tired of hearing this town called "Hang Town." They didn't want any more hangings. They didn't want their town called "Hang Town," and talked about by men on river boats from Pittsburgh to New Orleans. The hangings stopped and the people didn't want to remember. They will tell you it is not true today since the '13 flood cleaned the courthouse of its records. The records would have told you—all of them they kept!

The fighting has never ended here. This square of earth has been soaked with blood. Men have shot men down on this square of earth. Men have whittled down men with knives and beat their brains out with clubs. Men have fought and killed here. Men have torn up the seats in the courthouse and thrown them at each other in a free-for-all. Men have killed in the courthouse and trials have been discontinued and never called again. They couldn't have the trials. It would have been more trials and more trials. And the killers were let go and powder and lead became the Law. Squirrel hunters with long rifles—all of those boys—tillers of the high slopes—fighters and dreamers—sleeping eternally in their native dust today—many unknown, unnamed. But their dust is alive today. Their bloodstream is still here and it flows in the veins of the Bushmans and the Tussies. Their blood will always be here.

I remember the Mexican War and the boys that went to Vera Cruz. They helped General Zac Taylor when they fit the Mexicans. But the Mexican War was a drop in the bucket. It was a joke. It took the Rebellion to make a war here. Young

men wore the Blue and they wore the Gray. The old men, boys, women and children, that were left behind, fought another war among the hills. They bushwacked and they killed. Bands of guerillas roamed these hills and hollows and life wasn't safe even hiding in fodder shocks and under the rock-cliffs. And that War has been fought over and over here since 1865. People don't like each other yet over the Rebellion. It made two political parties here. It should be Southern Republican and Northern Democrat and Northern Republican and Southern Democrat! Each party is a stranger to the other across the border. War, war, war, fight, fight, fight, fight—how these people loved them! The sound of the rifle has been music to their ears. The beat of the drum has been music to their feet.

And it was lonely among the hills until somebody blew up the battleship Maine. It was another war and the boys felt jubilant. The game had been killed out and men had fought their blood-stream brothers. Now they could take a long voyage and fight. They wouldn't be fighting their own people for a change. They followed Teddy Roosevelt and he was a Great Man to them because he was a fighter. He loved a fight and they loved a fight. The boys went down and helped Teddy out. They heard their Old Kentucky Home sung and they threw themselves upon the ground and wept.

And the years got lonely again. Men started new fights in their own community and they renewed the old fights that had never been settled. The Law couldn't handle them. They killed and went free to kill again. They shot the windows from the courthouse and stole the fashionable spittoons and threw them into the river. "By-Gad, we'll spit our ambeer on the floor. To hell with that new-fangled idea that spittin' spreads disease and there is sich a thing in a man's body as germs. I've lived eighty years and I aint seen one of them things yit." They threw the court records in the river. They were found years later in big sacks with rocks tied to the sacks by boys in swimming. They cleaned house and started all over again. "What good air the damned old records nohow." Leave your records behind you, a trail of conquering blood and dust. Sweep from before you all that holds you back.

AND then there was a fight across the pond. The boys were jubilant again. They couldn't understand why men had to be drafted to fight a war even if it were in a fureign country—a land fur-over the sea! All but eighteen of the boys in this county enlisted and every man in one county up the river enlisted. Not a single man was drafted—the only county in all the counties of the forty-eight states of the United States. It was a longer trip than the boys got to take with Teddy. It was a great trip and a great fight. And many

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of the boys said they would do it again and many "didn't like the way they fit over there!" Couldn't see the man you shot at! What fun was fighting like that? That kind of fighting was a good kind to get away from. The fighting had changed a lot. And the boys came back—married the girls in their community and settled on the land. The old blood-stream flowed. And soon the men like the Bushmans and Tussies were fighting again—men like the Hillmans and Sturgins were fighting over an acre of ground for ten years. Men were killed over this acre of ground. One man was shot eight times and is still living. Whole families took part and their inlaws were drawn into the fracas on both sides.

An acre of ground was not enough to have a big fight over. An election was the thing to draw all good men together. The same old political parties that were made in 1865 fought it over again at the courthouse when the county election votes were counted. Men brought blankets to town and slept in the courthouse square with guns under their pillows. Men brought guns—so many of them that they laid away an extra supply under the leaves that had fallen from the maple trees on the courthouse square. The Tussies and the Bushmans manned the guns around the ballot boxes. The Tussies and the Bushmans took different shifts watching to see that the thieves from the other party didn't steal the ballot boxes and slip new ballot boxes into their places. The women came and cooked for the men. But in the shadow of night the women couldn't walk on a street or go near the courthouse square. It took two weeks to count eight thousand votes! What great fun it was! It was something to talk about. It gave the boys a chance to show they didn't have cowardly bones in their bodies.

Only the election fights now, the land fights, grudge fights and the line-fence fights! No more wars—and the squirrels are not plentiful. Where will the boys go next? What will be the next great fight? What will the boys do? They will grow lonesome. They cannot stay idle and till the soil without a little more excitement than coming here listening to a trial. No wonder they met at the Raccoon churchhouse and all the boys from All-corn Creek fought all the boys from Northfork Creek. The blood stream still runs—blood from the men that helped Dan'l Boone to conquer the wilderness—and helped to make America! Blood that fought with George Rogers Clark and Simon Kenton! Blood that fought with General Zac and wore the Blue and Gray! Blood that is slow to tame! Blood whose pioneer dust sleeps eternally on the mountain slopes and deep in the valleys! Blood that cannot awake and fight again!

The stranger turned from the courthouse and faced the hills. He looked up an empty street

where only the dead leaves drifted on the gray pavement. His face grew serious as he looked up the street where once his grandfather's father walked. He stood among the dreams of his people, the long-lost and forgotten years that had drifted without a destination as the leaves that drift upon the death-silent, lonely streets. He stood among stories that would never be told.

The stranger walked to his car. He looked again at the courthouse before he started the motor. He gave another look at the monument of a lost people, a people who have loved life, fought and killed; a people whose blood-stream was sliced-beet red, a people whose dreams did not get beyond the barriers of their hills. He drove slowly away from the silent stories, the dead life, gone and forgotten, the old gray-bearded whittlers fighting to make the biggest shaving. He drove down a street of loneliness and desolation whose gray pavement hid foot prints, dreams, blood and dust of his long-lost and forgotten people.

Literary Phone Book

By HARRY LORIN BINSSE

"A WORK of reference is a machine for answering questions." So says the editor of the "Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature," Mr. F. W. Bateson.* This, of course, is true in a basic sense. And if a work of reference does not function smoothly in its capacity as a machine for answering questions, then certainly it is of little worth. On this score the new Cambridge bibliography is about as useful a compilation for those interested in the field it covers as anything that exists. Certainly every college and university library will be incomplete without it, and I should even go so far as to urge its purchase for high school use.

But Mr. Bateson goes on to describe the fruit of his labor as "a shorthand history of English literature." And this it also is—in a way that casts vivid light on things which might otherwise never come to the surface. It would be well worth anybody's while to spend two or three hours with the first three volumes (the fourth is an index), idly turning the leaves and reflecting on what the eye catches as it scans the thousands of titles listed.

"CBEL sets out to record, as far as possible in chronological order, the authors, titles and editions, with relevant critical matter, of all the writings in book form (whether in English or Latin) that can still be said to possess some literary interest, by natives of what is now the British Empire, up to the year 1900." It is this style of treatment, this chronological schema for the work, which

* 4 vols. Cambridge-Macmillan. \$32.50.

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MACMILLAN

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make these volumes more than a machine for answering questions. If everything had been arranged in some other fashion, of course the work would have been useful, but it would have had no utility comparable to that which it has.

The whole field of English letters ("writers who were primarily literary artists . . . have been allowed more elbow-room than all but the very greatest historians, theologians, philosophers, scholars or scientists") has been divided into five periods. The first starts with the earliest surviving compositions and continues up to approximately the time of the Norman conquest. The second goes on to the year 1500. The third ends with the Restoration (1660), the fourth with 1800, and the fifth with 1900.

Within each period the authors are arranged according to the genre in which each achieved his greatest reputation. Within each genre, the authors are arranged chronologically as much as possible. Each more important author has a section entirely to himself, which not only lists editions of his own work, but also gives the principal scholarly books and articles which have been written about him. Minor authors are grouped together, with critical material concerning them also given in full, and in every case there are elaborate sections devoted to the political, educational and cultural background of each period.

Obviously such an arrangement can be of inestimable value to a person who wishes to make an intensive study either of some single author or of some period in English literature. Naturally an independent seeker after information will have to have a certain amount of "feel" for bibliography; he must know the difference on sight between a highly specialized contribution to a learned journal and a general critical appreciation, else he will waste much time looking through literature which is too specialized for any but other specialists. But acquiring this sort of "feel" for books and their qualities is something any literary student must do, or else he had best give up his literary studies.

Flashes

As you leaf through the volumes, little details strike you, sometimes to puzzle, sometimes merely to amuse. Naturally I could not help noticing several COMMONWEAL contributors whose writings on literary subjects are included. Katherine Brégy, Sister Mary Madeleva, Theodore Maynard—familiar names naturally strike the eye more than the names of pundits having only the vaguest significance, and sometimes having none at all. The fact that the Funk and Wagnalls dictionary is not included in the general bibliography of dictionaries raises a question—seeing that Webster is included and is also American. Why this favoritism? The following title, in a bibliography of works on prose

rhythm, could not help bringing a smile: "Valois, N. *Étude sur le Rhythme des Bulles pontificales*. Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes, XLII, Paris, 1881." That Papal bulls have a rhythm all their own is certainly a pleasant thought. Then I notice a work I probably should know all about, but of which I am profoundly ignorant: "Gillow, Joseph. *A Bibliographical Dictionary of the English Catholics*. 5 vols. 1885-1902."

But such accidental flashes are in the same category as the amusing things one can find while idly glancing through a metropolitan phone book—names that are funny because of some private association—names that are funny because they were intended to be funny—names that are funny because their unfortunate possessors have never had the courage to do anything about it. Preserved Fish.

The Germans

You cannot help but notice, if you begin to examine these volumes carefully, a thing which you may always have taken more or less for granted, but the magnitude of which you can only appreciate by study of such a work as this. And that thing is the overwhelming bulk of German scholarly and critical work in the field of English literature. Knowing the German university system, one can easily conceive that there would be a good deal of German research in any department of knowledge. Leopold Infeld, in his recent autobiography, says of German mathematical research (of course he speaks of the days before Hitler; there has been a considerable change since):

Papers appeared in German journals six weeks after they were sent to the editor. Characteristic of this spirit of competition and priority quarrels was a story which Loria told me of a professor of his in Germany, a most distinguished man. This professor had attacked someone's work, and it turned out that he had read the paper too quickly; his attack was unjustified, and he simply had not taken the trouble to understand what the author said. When this was pointed out to him he was genuinely sorry that he had published a paper containing a severe and unjust criticism. But he consoled himself with the remark: "Better a wrong paper than no paper at all."

But even if one is aware of this feverish activity, characteristic of German scholarly work for the last hundred years, one could not conceive of the mass of books and monographs and articles in learned journals listed in CBEL without actually examining some of the bibliographies.

To illustrate: of books on English prosody before Chaucer, sixteen of those listed are English, one is Dutch, one is French, and twenty-seven are German. Of works on French "loan-words" in English, one is English, two are Scandinavian, and ten are German. Surely this is a subject on which one might have expected at least one Frenchman to write something! The first listed Anglo-Saxon grammar was published in Halle (E. Sievers,

"Angelsächsische Grammatik," 1882). English students of the subject were presented with a translation of this German work three years later, but it was ten years after that before the first Anglo-Saxon grammar written by an English author appeared. The first Middle English grammar also was published in Halle (L. Morsbach, "Mittelenglische Grammatik," 1896). The first anthology of old English literature was, indeed, an English production (1834), but it was followed within four years by a German volume of the same sort. One could continue such *exempla* for pages. And one cannot help wondering why all this should have happened. Surely Germany did not have a monopoly on historical investigation, nor did it have sole access to the methods of scientific philology. An examination of the list of scholarly periodicals in the field also points to German supremacy in literary-historical studies. (This supremacy disappears when one comes down to more recent literary history; what I am saying here applies principally to the period before 1660.) Thus the earliest periodical, *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen*, was German and was founded in 1846. The first English equivalent was *Notes and Queries* (1849), and the first American was *Modern Language Notes* and the *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* (both 1886). Meanwhile, in Germany *Anglia* and *Englische Studien* were founded in 1877, and the *Jahrbuch für romanische und englische Sprache und Litteratur* had been established in 1859. The first French review in the field was not to appear until 1923.

Once again, the question arises: why all this activity in Germany without any equivalent counterpart in England? There is probably no absolutely satisfactory answer. The German university system, which grew up as it did for any number of reasons, was particularly likely to encourage the application of keen minds to the gathering of what often seems useless information and to the publication thereof as a means to achieve some desired docentship or professorship. But it is also significant that studies of early English literary monuments fitted in admirably with German interest in mythological Teutonic heroes. In all likelihood this tremendous interest in the stories about the Scandinavian and Germanic gods and semi-gods has a deep association with the suddenly emergent nationalism, which became an all-absorbing interest of so many Germans at the beginning of the last century. In 1829 Grimm published *Die deutsche Heldensage*, and in 1835 his brother published *Deutsche Mythologie*. All this, of course, fitted in also with the general romantic preoccupation with legend, with the dawn of European history, and with the Middle Ages which in a sense were the creators, especially esthetically, of the characters of Teutonic myth.

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But, as I have said, in Germany scholars had their definite purpose in devoting themselves to the epics of their people. They wanted Germans to know that they need not be ashamed because Germany had no Homer; they wanted Germans to know that Germany did have many Homers, and that as a race (or nation) she had had just as distinguished a dawn-twilight as the Greeks. This is not to suggest that other Europeans were not also interested in investigating their national folk lore and mythology. What I am trying to point out is that in Germany this study took on such wide proportions that it produced a Wagner, whereas in France it did little more than produce some good adaptations and stimulate a Belgian to write *Pèlleas*, and in England children's books.

And one cannot also help wondering whether all of this university activity did not do a great deal to promote the state of mind which since the last War has seriously propounded the idea that Germans should return to their ancient hero worship and cast out the religion of meekness and love as being unsuited to the descendants of a race of great warriors and great doers.

Of course it is easy to quote the titles of some of these German studies and laugh at the silliness which can lead an adult and intelligent man to devote years of research to matters utterly uninteresting to anyone except a few specialists. It is easy to make fun of such things, it is also easy to hate them as representing a colossal waste of human intelligence. Hitler in "*Mein Kampf*" makes it perfectly clear that he has nothing but scorn for the Professor, and in Germany the professor was preeminently the man who turned out special studies on such matters as "Together-hanging word-groups, linked through the caesura or accent, in the Anglosaxon epic." It is symptomatic how very few of the German works cited were published after 1931—I could find only a scattered handful, whereas the production had kept up a steady stream before then. Yet it would be somewhat of an irony if it were to turn out that basically many of the National Socialist cultural ideas sprang from the preoccupation which made possible such specialized studies—at least in the fields of philology, history and literature.

CBEL, as I have said, is divided into five main chronological sections. Naturally the earliest—and historically the longest—section is also the shortest as far as listings are concerned. The first 500 years are represented in these three volumes by 58 pages. The next 400 years claim 102 pages; the next 160 years (just after the invention of printing) produce 592 pages; and the 140 years from 1660 to 1800 account for 1,001 pages. The rate of production continues to increase in the nineteenth century, so that it alone has 1,096 pages of listings. But if the earlier periods physically could not produce so prolifically, they

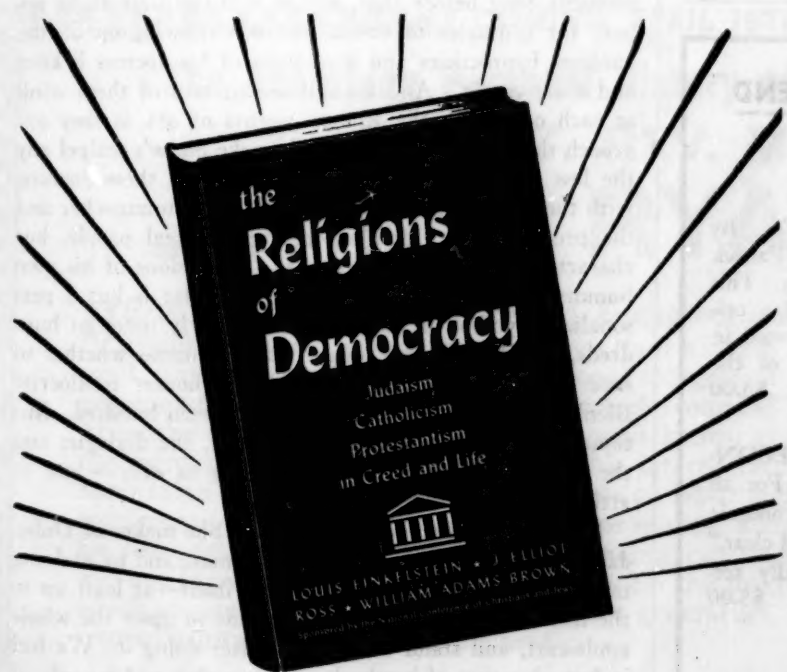
at least produced some works of enduring quality. Thus Chaucer has the second longest bibliography of any poet in these volumes. Naturally Shakespeare has the longest of all—more pages (72) than are devoted to the whole first 500 years of English literature. But it came as a very real surprise to me to discover which poet was third.

I should have assumed that it would be Milton or Wordsworth. If I had been told that it was neither of these, I should certainly have supposed that it would be Pope or Dryden or even Shelley or Keats. But it is none of these. The third longest bibliography (longest by a great deal) in these volumes is that devoted to Byron, and even a casual examination of that bibliography makes vivid the immense influence Byron has had upon intellectual history—an influence which we are all only too likely to forget. His work, not only in the form of collected editions, but also with each separately printed volume, was translated into every principal European language and into a considerable number of the minor languages. Some of what he wrote even was translated into Armenian. Writing about him also comes from all over Europe, and the people who wrote about him were the great authors of the period—Hazlitt, Washington Irving, de Vigny, Scott, Hugo, Merimée,

Macaulay, Sand, Mazzini, Kingsley, Mickiewicz, even Treitschke. One wonders a little whether this tremendous and seemingly continuing influence has any significance for contemporary life. It seems to me that there is a certain inverted Byronism in such phenomena as surrealism and in the nihilism which enters into National Socialism.

All that I have said as to the great bulk of German scholarship in this field is not meant to imply that the English have done nothing. It would seem rather that the English excel in precisely the kind of project represented by this bibliography, a project made possible only by the coordinated collaboration of hundreds of workers. Such an achievement, unequalled in any other culture, as the "New English Dictionary" represents precisely the sort of scholarship at which the English seem to be unexcelled. And certainly, also, English scholarship itself produced literature, which is not something you can say about the productions of the German professors. Matthew Arnold and Ruskin and Quiller-Couch and Saintsbury and Middleton Murry have no parallels in the country which invented the Ph.D.; yet without German scholarship, could there have been soundness in English critical writing?

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much of the apparatus, with which it seems principally concerned, is like the thousands of numbers in the Manhattan directory which I shall never call up; but there are many precious numbers in that directory, and there is an even larger proportion of the same in CBEL.

The Stage & Screen

The Doctor's Dilemma

I DON'T know what Bernard Shaw would think of Katherine Cornell's enactment of Jennifer Dubedat, but I know it fascinated me more than anything Miss Cornell has done in recent years. In pictorial beauty, in grace and dignity of movement, in radiance of personality, in depth of womanly feeling, Miss Cornell has never surpassed it, and that means that no living actress has in these qualities surpassed it. It marks Miss Cornell as a great personality, perhaps even as a great actress—even though Mr. Shaw might protest she isn't acting his play. But if she isn't, she is acting a play finer than Mr. Shaw has written, finer because more human and more sincere. "The Doctor's Dilemma" isn't Shaw at his highest; it isn't a "Candida" or a "Saint Joan"; but it was and is still an amusing play. The medical profession has been the butt of the comic dramatist from the days of Molière, and probably long before that, and it will continue to be his butt for centuries to come. Shaw's showing-up of the vanities, hypocrisies and stupidities of his doctors is keen and truly comic. And though one or two of them wink at each other like the Roman augurs of old as they approach their sacrifice, this doesn't make Shaw's scalpel any the less sharp. But the fact remains that these doctors, with the exceptions of the Hebrew Dr. Schutzmacher and the provincial Dr. Blenkinsop, are not real people, but characteristic Shavian puppets, the expressions of his own humors and whimsies. Likewise Dubedat is but a personalized symbol of the artist of the early nineteen hundreds, and Mr. Shaw's idea of the dilemma—whether to save this talented blackguard or the honest mediocrity Blenkinsop—is also distinctly early nineteen hundred. But though the basic idea is perhaps dated, the dialogue and the humors are as vivid and amusing as ever—and as artificial.

But Miss Cornell is not artificial. She makes of Dubedat's wife a glowing, loving, vivid woman, and by so doing makes us almost believe in the play itself—at least up to the last scene in which Shaw proceeds to upset the whole apple-cart, and stand on his head after doing it. We feel in her adoration of her husband the pathos and tragedy of a woman blinded by love and the worship of an ideal. In doing this she rewrites the play, but how much finer a play it becomes, and how much less forgivable is the last scene in which Jennifer mocks everything she has been before! Shaw has always been part sage, part poet, part harlequin and part just bad boy; he is never more compounded of these than in "The Doctor's Dilemma." In

the time to come it is probable he will be remembered by two plays, "Candida" and "Saint Joan," for in these though there are flashes of motley, the base is honest emotion and humanity. Miss Cornell has played in both these, and proved herself worthy of them; she is far more than worthy of "The Doctor's Dilemma." Miss Cornell has surrounded herself with a splendid company including Bramwell Fletcher as the artist and Clarence Derwent, Colin Keith-Johnston, Raymond Massey, Whitford Kane, Cecil Humphries and Ralph Forbes as the doctors. All are excellent, as is the direction of Guthrie McClintic, the settings of Donald Oenslager and the costumes of Motley. Of the supporting cast perhaps special mention should go to Mr. Derwent, Mr. Kane, Mr. Keith-Johnston and Mr. Fletcher. It is in short one of the most brilliantly acted plays of recent years. (*At the Shubert Theatre.*)

GRENVILLE VERNON.

Capra and Doe's Little Punks

FOR YEARS Frank Capra has been making pictures about little guys, unimportant nobodies who go through a series of humorous and sentimental incidents, and just when they're losing the tussle against rich, powerful big guys, these nice little fellows with the aid of patriotism, horse sense and the Golden Rule conquer all obstacles and win the battle. Typical Capra hero is tall, lanky, open-faced, honest-eyed Gary Cooper—or James

Stewart, who is a younger edition of the same man. Beefy Edward Arnold is his made-to-order tycoon-politician-villain. Capra's latest, "Meet John Doe," continues with variations the themes of "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington," "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town," "You Can't Take It With You."

John Doe, a Mr. Average Man with that fantastic idea of using suicide as a protest against the world's evils, is the inspiration of a newspaper woman about to lose her job. And when the public and rival papers demand a real man, along comes an out-of-work bush league pitcher who is glad to step into the Doe shoes to make a little money. But with daily articles, radio and the formation of John Doe Clubs all over the country, the scheme gets out of hand, becomes so big with its millions of members that the fascistic publisher sees it electing himself to the US presidency. The story is as simple and incredible as that, but Robert Riskin has written it up in such a convincing screen play and Capra has directed it so well, with his experienced eyes on the audience, that this "It Can't Happen Here" idea seems credible enough to happen here.

Many times during its overly long two-hour run, "Meet John Doe" goes so sentimentally soft that Capra has to jerk it back into line with cynical sarcasm or hard reality. Gary Cooper, in a first rate performance as Doe, is a lovable dope with a special sense of honor and fair play and a long line of platitudes in Love-Thy-Neighbor

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speeches (which the girl reporter writes for him, but which she might have snatched from Dale Carnegie). Reporter Barbara Stanwyck is hard and mercenary until she falls for Doe, her own creation. Publisher Edward Arnold personifies to perfection the well-fed, wealthy, ruthless fascist who uses any means to crush the little punks and gain his selfish ends. As Doe's friend, Walter Brennan helps to swing the story away from its sentimental pitfalls by sneering at the overdoses of sweetness, dissenting against the complexities of modern living and expounding his theories about contemporary helots. However the film has too much of expounding and speechifying. All the leads, and several of the minor characters, mount the stand at some time to deliver their ideas on everything from Americanism to finding-good-in-everyone. But strangely enough the film's best scene involves one of these speeches and is made magnificent through James Gleason's excellent portrayal of a drunken editor who explains why he is a sucker for *The Star Spangled Banner* and why publisher Arnold must be stopped in his plans to take over the country. Producer-director Capra shows his master hand many times in his film: the ball game (without a ball) in Doe's hotel room; the wonderful suspense of Doe's first broadcast; the beautiful sequence in the rainy stadium where thousands gather to hear their hero; the shots of the faces of these extras when the wicked publisher exposes Doe as a fake; the acting of the stars and such

minor players as Spring Byington, Regis Toomey, Irving Bacon.

While Frank Capra should be censured for allowing his picture to slip occasionally into maudlinism and foggy, undeveloped ideas and for leaving the finale blurred with uncertainty and hokum (as if no one knew how to end it, so it just stopped), he also deserves highest praise for his superb craftsmanship which results in outstanding entertainment and for his brave protest against the present state of civilization.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Week

Faiths Men Live by

The Religions of Democracy. Louis Finkelstein, J. Elliot Ross and William Adams Brown. Devin-Adair. \$2.00.

THE SUBTITLE, "Judaism, Catholicism, Protestantism in Creed and Life," is a surer index to content than is the title "The Religions of Democracy." For the latter must be interpreted in the American sense as the three major religions of a democracy, and there is no attempt on the part of the three authors to predicate the necessity of the three religions to democracy itself. Their purpose is almost entirely expository, and to Dr. Robert A. Ashworth, Editorial Secretary of the National Conference of Christian and Jews, which organization sponsors the publication, is left the duty of illustrating the inter-

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dependence of democracy and religion as practiced by those three great faiths to which the majority of Americans subscribe. This Dr. Ashworth does admirably in his Introduction, although one might wish he had been granted more space in which to develop his thesis. There is one passage here which almost demands quotation: "The American principle of religious liberty, expressed very tersely, is simply this: that the state should not forbid its citizens to do what their religion requires, nor require them to do what their religion forbids. The principle assumes, of course, that what a citizen's religion forbids or requires does not involve the violation of the fundamental human rights of those who hold convictions different from his own." The potency of democracy lies in the fact that it recognizes those fundamental human rights in man which he derives from God and that there is essentially inherent in the delegation to the state of authority to protect those rights a power which comes to the state from God Himself. The danger to the American system does not come from the beliefs of the three faiths *per se*; it comes on one hand from those who, nominally allied, fail in their practice of faith; and, on the other, from those who openly or implicitly are anti-God.

But there are many who are genuinely, and oftentimes rabidly, convinced that in the very tenets of some faith there is danger to the American system of government. Were "The Religions of Democracy" to be read by people in that class, the book's publication would be an extraordinarily important event. It remains so nevertheless for the three proponents have lucidly and with mastery summarized not only what is the core of their coreligionists' religious beliefs and practices but their approach as well to life in all its aspects. It is refreshing, too, that none of the authors has overlooked the fact that he must deal to a certain extent with the ideal observance of religion, and each is frank in stating that even among his own group the sheep-goat division must be recognized. If an intelligent Catholic, then, can find value—as he unquestionably can—in Father Ross's presentation, it is obvious that he will benefit even more widely from those of Dr. Finkelstein and Dr. Brown. And so with the Jew and Protestant; each will learn more about his own and vastly more about the other two religions.

Admittedly, Father Ross had the easier task and, perhaps because of this, Dr. Finkelstein and Dr. Brown deserve heartier congratulations. As exponent of that religion from which the other two stem, Dr. Finkelstein does not depart into comparative study, but at the same time he must treat the three classes of Judaism as it exists today—the orthodox, the conservative and the reformed. He has distilled that major part which is common, and neatly made the distinctions which are more largely a matter of ritual. Father Ross, too, while pointing always to Catholicism's espousal of the Old Testament, embarks on no comparisons. It falls to Dr. Brown, who makes the difficulties of his assignment obvious, to compare Protestantism with Catholicism. This is, however, but a method of development, possibly quite necessary and certainly advantageous in a clearer understanding of the Protestant position.

Apart from its obvious value, there is very much in the book which is implicit but not stressed. The reader will discover this for himself. He will conclude, in all likelihood, with a sighed "if"—if every Jew were a good Jew, if every Catholic were a good Catholic, if every Protestant were a good Protestant, what a mighty brotherhood would

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stand four-square against those forces which overtly and secretly, in many forthright and devious ways, work to eliminate God from the minds and hearts of men and, with Him, all that insures the dignity of a creature less than the angels and higher than the brutes.

JOHN GILLAND BRUNINI.

BIOGRAPHY

Crusader in Crinoline. Forrest Wilson. Lippincott. \$3.75.

ON MARCH 20, 1853, the first anniversary of the publication of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," American sales of that famous book had passed the 300,000 mark and it was estimated that world sales totalled 2,500,000 copies.

An all-time high had been achieved. Nowadays, on a population ratio, American sales would pass the 1,500,000 mark in order to compete with such a success. Harriet Beecher Stowe rose to front-rank literary notoriety on the strength of her second book's great popularity and emotional appeal.

But she wrote other important works, and her own life was interesting. Mr. Wilson has succeeded admirably in giving us her story in a balanced, brilliantly written study that holds one's attention throughout its 700 pages. The bibliography, indexing and details of manufacture are admirably executed and deserve a word of praise. And there are 30 excellent illustrations. From every point of view "Crusader in Crinoline" is highly satisfactory. This reviewer, although not attracted by the subject, found himself compelled to admit that he had discovered the best biography of an American that he ever read. To him it seems superior to any Pulitzer biography of recent years.

However distorted Mrs. Stowe's picture of slavery may have been, it is noteworthy that ninety years of counter-propaganda "have failed to disfigure her portrait." But when she attacked the fame of Byron, long idolized in the memory of Americans, she made the greatest and most significant blunder of her career and paid the penalty for vaingloriously noble intentions and at least one downright untruth. Thenceforth, she never regained the high opinion formerly held of her by millions of ardent admirers. Even the *Independent* turned against her. Yet no critic of the day noted the "untruth."

Mr. Wilson has fashioned a civilized portrait, steering an even course in which his own strokes are neither under-emphasized nor overdone. The famous Beecher background is interestingly portrayed, as are also the great evangelic trek westward to Cincinnati and the events prior to the slavery issue. Here is much human interest. Afterward the work becomes a "success story," marred slightly by the subject's own strange mixture of rectitude and humility. In many ways she was an average woman.

LLOYD WENDELL ESHLEMAN.

Once A Rebel. Simon Kaplan. Farrar. \$2.50.

MR. KAPLAN, unlike the great majority of the Jewish immigrants of his day, is a Russian scholar—i.e., he attended a school where the instruction was given in Russian—with the result that he acquired a whole-souled admiration for the great Russian writers. Moreover there were but two other Jewish families in the village where he was born and bred. Although his own family practiced the strictest Jewish orthodoxy, one is conscious throughout the book of a more cosmopolitan background arising out of the mingling of his hereditary

culture with the national culture to which he was exposed. Drawn early in life, a mere boy, into revolutionary activity—it was that of the pre-Bolshevik movement (1905)—he ended by becoming a liberal of the Kerensky type. His account of his boyhood days at home and later (he was still only fifteen) as a clerk to his uncle who superintended a gang of wild Norse woodsmen in the timberlands of the Pripet marshes, makes delightful reading. It is only his portrait of the young Stalin—encountered in a Tsarist prison—that strikes the reader as a trifle over-drawn in prescience of grandeur, influenced too possibly by his later knowledge of the man. The author's middle-class sympathies are revealed in the shock he experienced on learning that revolutionaries could *steal*—human life could be taken in the service of the movement, but property . . .

J. K. PAULDING.

FICTION

The World of the Thibaults. Volume I, The Thibaults. Volume II, Summer, 1914. Roger Martin du Gard. Translated by Stuart Gilbert. Viking. \$6.00.

AGAINST any attack of insurgent optimism we prescribe du Gard's over-long serial novel. The first part, already reviewed, gave the early history of the brothers, Antoine and Jacques, and a particularly cheerful section was devoted to the lingering death agony of their horrid old father. But Volume I is a nursery saga in misery compared to Volume II. Antoine is now a famous surgeon and involved in an arduous liaison with Madame Battaincourt; Jacques, who jilted Jenny de Fontanin, has joined the international revolutionary socialists in Geneva. It is June 28, 1914, and the few weeks which intervene between Sarajevo and the invasion of Belgium are followed day by day and almost hour by hour with the crescendo of a nightmare, as Jacques rushes between Geneva, Paris and Brussels agitating for the international general strike which it was hoped might avert the world disaster. M. du Gard believes Austria under Berchtold's leadership to have been the most guilty, with Russia a close second, the Kaiser being only the tool of the German generals. Poincaré's foreign policy is excoriated and the Russian alliance; England's clean bill is blotted by Grey's weakness. With the assassination of Jaurès, all hopes for international peace propaganda crumbled. Jacques had been reunited with Jenny during the crisis, but he is forced to leave her again for a last-hour attempt to scatter appeals for peace from an airplane. It crashes and Jacques's tortures with his crushed legs are not minimized. Antoine survives till 1918, when he dies from having been gassed the year before—and dies for 252 pages! Jacques was secure in his faith in the working classes, but Antoine only had science and abjures all religion when the chaplain tells him that "a just war removes the Christian ban on murder." The most striking new character is Meynestrel, the revolutionary leader, but the death of the Thibault brothers leaves one with but one regret—that Jacques's wolfish little son survives and may some day figure in another volume.

E. V. R. WYATT.

In This Our Life. Ellen Glasgow. Harcourt. \$2.50.
THE STUDY of environment, which traces back to such writers as Howells, Crane and even Mark Twain, is perhaps the leading theme in American fiction of the past 20 years. Sherwood Anderson and Sinclair Lewis led the way with their well-documented studies of

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The January-March issue of the *Dublin Review* which is in stock at THE COMMONWEAL office, includes such writers and reviewers as Donald Attwater, Christopher Dawson, Michael de la Bedoyere, Graham Greene, Gerard Hopkins, Jacques Maritain, David Matthew, and others.

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small towns and industrial cities, the hotel business, pro-
fessional life, etc. Elmer Rice is the leading playwright
to center all his energies on reproducing a slice of life,
scientifically accurate in every detail. In such photo-
graphic studies characters are secondary; how many of
Lewis's heroes or heroines can be said to be still remem-
bered? Also of less import is the world of ideas, that
rich source of inspiration for so many leading European
novelists. Faithful reproduction based on painstaking
research is uppermost.

Ellen Glasgow, on the other hand, with her interest in
ideas, is closer to the European pattern. This is strikingly
true of her latest book where philosophizing is so pro-
nounced that hardly a domestic conversation takes place
without embodying questions on the meaning of life or
some important psychological observation. With char-
acters in no way remarkable for their intellectual efforts
set in a sleepy small town in the South, this is at times
hardly credible. It is the one flaw in an otherwise remark-
able work of art. And yet this is because the author has
so much to say about the present.

"In This Our Life" is really a study of the effects of
the lack of religious faith on two American generations.
Nearly all the young people seem beset with a desperate,
self-centered quest for happiness. Stanley, the younger
daughter, is so beautiful that when she decides to run
away with her sister's husband she sets in motion a series
of events which ruins several lives. Her mother, who had
become a chronic invalid so that everyone would wait on
her hand and foot, is remarkably successful in getting con-
stant attention. Uncle William represents the successful
industrialist who achieved his power and wealth through
enterprise and ruthlessness.

Injustice in America today is symbolized by the fate of
Parry, a sensitive, intelligent, ambitious Negro boy, as
well as by Stanley's intense and straightforward sister, Roy;
both suffer deeply. Asa Timberlake, the hard-working,
self-sacrificing father, has a life of drudgery broken only
by occasional days with an understanding friend in the
country. Perhaps his greatest sorrow is his inability to
understand his children, even Roy, his favorite child.

The horrors and violence of war and revolution which
figure so prominently in other leading best-sellers are miss-
ing in this book, but Miss Glasgow does not present a
happy picture. Her criticism of modern American life
is almost wholly negative, and it continually rings true.
The only thing is that the Timberlake family, young and
old, could hardly be considered as typical as undoubtedly
they are meant to be. The constancy and strength of the
sixty-year-old Asa provides the one positive element in a
book, which I repeat, will be remembered not for its
characters or a vivid *mise en scène*, but for its rich and
stimulating succession of ideas. EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.

*Says Mrs. Crowley, Says She. Doran Hurley. Long-
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MR. HURLEY'S clever and amiable expositions of
folk-lore of Irish Catholicism are familiar to many
readers. They are always truly observed and reported;
they are exasperatingly accurate and they have much of
the arrogant charm which one associates with the tri-
umphant Irish. I am in the minority, I suppose, but
herself, Mrs. Crowley, does not have half the interest
that several of the minor characters possess. I wondered,
reading this book, if Fathers Silva and Krasnowski really
liked being patronized, or if Miss Constance Casey didn't
have the right of it, oftener than not?

Here in New York, we're not very different from Mr. Hurley's people in Millington, and more than a few of us are going to feel a nostalgia for some old parish wherein we were raised, after we make Mrs. Crowley's acquaintance. But it will be no nostalgia for the Mrs. Crowleys of this world. As I remember them, they were always the first ones to complain if the boys were playing ball in front of their houses.

J. G. E. HOPKINS.

RELIGION

A History of the Expansion of Christianity, Volume IV: The Great Century (1800-1914); Europe and the United States of America. K. S. Latourette. Harper. \$3.50.

BOOKS of broad grasp and mature thinking on the position of the Church in the world are relatively few. The reader who picks up new productions in search of them quickly finds himself saying, "But this man is thinking only of Europe, or only of the West—why does he not think of the world?" Thus while empire builders and industrialists conceive their ideas in terms of the globe, much that is Catholic falls short on this score.

Professor Latourette of Yale gives us the fourth of a seven volume series which seeks to provide us with a world view of Christian expansion. Volume I reached to approximately 500 A.D.; Volume II the next thousand years to 1500; Volume III to 1800. The nineteenth century is to require three volumes of which this is the first.

This volume may be regarded as the story of home missions, since it treats principally of the Christian movement in Europe and the United States, in our land reviewing at length the work among the Indians and Negroes. However it is the chapters which describe the general Christian advance during the nineteenth century which prove of highest interest.

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While Professor Latourette never seeks to be startling in his concepts, he achieves synthesis and balance. We sense that here is a scholarly gentleman who, regretting the divisions in Christendom and feeling that Christianity at its largest is all too small for the needs of the world, seeks to present the sum of Christian accomplishment in broad compass. The completed series promises to be a unique and notable triumph in historical writing and an invaluable manual for all who are world-minded. Those of us who know and admire Professor Latourette personally and who are aware of the years of effort which have gone into this work grow prouder and happier as each volume appears.

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The Inner Forum

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY at Washington, D. C., has just announced that this summer, the fiftieth anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, the tenth of *Quadragesimo Anno*, it will inaugurate a permanent Institute of Catholic Social Studies. Director of the Catholic University's summer session is Dr. Roy J. Deferrari; Director of the new Institute is Rev. John F. Cronin, S.S., of St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore. The faculty includes Louis Francis Buckley of the Economics Department at Notre Dame University, Dr. Wilfred J. Garvin of the Sociology Department at Mt. St. Mary's College, Emmitsburg, Md., Dr. Elizabeth Morrissey of the Economics Department of Notre Dame of Maryland College, Baltimore, Rev. Wilfrid Parsons, S.J., of the Catholic University, and Dr. Percy A. Robert of the Sociology Department of the Catholic University.

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CONTRIBUTORS

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Raymond E. F. LARSSON is a poet now living on Staten Island; his last volume of verse was "Weep and Prepare."

Robert SPEAIGHT is an English actor and writer whose last book was a life of Saint Thomas of Canterbury.

Jesse STUART is a Kentucky novelist, author of "Men of the Mountains," "Trees of Heaven," "Man with a Bull-Tongue Plow," "Head O'W-Hollow," "Beyond Dark Hills."

John GILLAND BRUNINI was Executive Director and Secretary of the Temple of Religion at the New York World's Fair and is Executive Secretary of the Catholic Poetry Society of America.

Lloyd W. ESHLEMAN is the author of a recent biography of William Morris and of "Moulders of Destiny."

J. K. PAULDING was one of the first members of the University Settlement movement and in this connection taught English to immigrants; he is a member of the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures and is Chairman of its Exceptional Photoplays Committee.

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